

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE
U.S. Embassy Sofia / Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs
Notice of Funding Opportunity

Funding Opportunity Title:	U.S. Embassy Sofia 2024 Ambassador Fund for Cultural Preservation (AFCP 2024)
Funding Opportunity Number:	PDS-AFCP-FY24-01-SOFIA
Deadline for Applications:	January 8, 2024
Maximum for Each Award:	\$10,000 to \$500,000

A. PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

The U.S. Embassy Sofia Public Diplomacy Section (PDS) is pleased to announce an open competition for organizations to submit proposals for funding through the U.S. Ambassadors Fund for Cultural Preservation (AFCP). The application process involves two rounds. In **Round 1**, the U.S. Embassy will collect project ideas from eligible applicants in the form of **concept notes, due by January 08, 2024, to SofiaGrants@state.gov using the subject line “AFCP Application for Round 1.”** Only applicants with promising ideas in Round 1 will be notified of the next steps in the application process.

Project Objectives: The AFCP Grants Program supports the preservation of archaeological sites, historic buildings and monuments, museum collections, and forms of traditional cultural expression, such as indigenous languages and crafts. Appropriate project activities may include:

- a) Anastylis (reassembling a site from its original parts)
- b) Conservation (addressing damage or deterioration to an object or site)
- c) Consolidation (connecting or reconnecting elements of an object or site)
- d) Documentation (recording in analog or digital format the condition and salient features of an object, site, or tradition)
- e) Inventory (listing of objects, sites, or traditions by location, feature, age, or other unifying characteristic or state)
- f) Preventive Conservation (addressing conditions that threaten or damage a site, object, collection, or tradition)
- g) Restoration (replacing missing elements to recreate the original appearance of an object or site, usually appropriate only with fine arts, decorative arts, and historic buildings)
- h) Stabilization (reducing the physical disturbance of an object or site)

B. FEDERAL AWARD INFORMATION

Closing Date for applications: January 8, 2024

Funding Type: Grant

Award amounts: \$10,000 to \$500,000

Length of performance period: 12 to 60 months

This notice is subject to availability of funding. U.S. Embassy Sofia does not guarantee availability of funding by receiving applications under this announcement.

C. ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION

Eligible Applicants/Implementers

The Center defines eligible project implementers as reputable and accountable non-commercial entities that can demonstrate they have the requisite capacity to manage projects to preserve cultural heritage. Eligible implementers may include non-governmental organizations (NGO's), museums, educational institutions, ministries of culture, or similar institutions and organizations, including U.S.-based educational institutions and organizations subject to Section 501(c)(3) of the tax code. The AFCP **will not** award grants to individuals, commercial entities, or past award recipients that have not fulfilled the objectives or reporting requirements of previous awards.

Cost Sharing or Matching:

Cost sharing is encouraged by not required.

Other Eligibility Requirements:

Potential implementers must be registered and active in the U.S. government's System for Award Management (SAM) to receive U.S. federal assistance. If an embassy's project idea is advanced to Round 2 and the anticipated implementer is not registered in SAM, the embassy should initiate the registration process immediately so that it is in place in the event the project is ultimately selected for an award. See paragraph 23 below for information on how to register. The registration process can take several weeks to complete so it is important to avoid any delay.

D. APPLICATION AND SUBMISSION INFORMATION

Round 1 Concept Note Requirements

All concept note applications must be in English and must include:

- a) Project basics, including working title, anticipated project length (Note: Applicants may propose project periods of up to 60 months), location/site, and project cost estimate (amount requested from AFCP; in U.S. dollars).
- b) Project implementer.
- c) Project Scope of Work summarizing (3,000 characters maximum):
 - preservation activities and

- related host country or community goals and the activities planned to achieve those goals (i.e., what they hope to gain from the project beyond preserving the heritage and how these goals will be achieved).
- Anticipated strategic outreach activities to build awareness and engage communities and stakeholders
- Five (5) high quality digital images (JPEGs) or audiovisual files that convey the nature and condition of the site, collection, or tradition and show the urgency or need for the proposed project (collapsing walls, water damage, etc.).

Submission Dates and Times:

Please submit concept note applications for Round 1 by 5:00 p.m. Sofia time January 08, 2024 the following e-mail address: SofiaGrants@state.gov

Important: Please put in the subject line of your e-mail: "AFCP Application for Round 1"

Ineligible Activities and Unallowable Costs:

AFCP **does not** support the following activities or costs, and the Embassy will deem applications requesting AFCP support for any of these activities or costs ineligible:

- a) Preservation or purchase of privately or commercially owned cultural objects, collections, or real property, including those whose transfer from private or commercial to public ownership is envisioned, planned, or in process but not complete at the time of application.
- b) Preservation of natural heritage (physical, biological, and geological formations, paleontological collections, habitats of threatened species of animals and plants, fossils, etc.) unless the natural heritage has a cultural heritage connection or dimension.
- c) Preservation of hominid or human remains.
- d) Preservation of news media (newspapers, newsreels, radio and TV programs, etc.).
- e) Preservation of published materials available elsewhere (books, periodicals, etc.).
- f) Development of curricula or educational materials for classroom use.
- g) Archaeological excavations or exploratory surveys for research purposes.
- h) Historical research, except in cases where the research is justifiable and integral to the success of the proposed project.
- i) Acquisition or creation of new exhibits, objects, or collections for new or existing museums.
- j) Construction of new buildings, building additions, or permanent coverings (over archaeological sites, for example).

- k) Commissions of new works of art or architecture for commemorative or economic development purposes.
- l) Creation of new or the modern adaptation of existing traditional dances, songs, chants, musical compositions, plays, or other performances.
- m) Creation of replicas or conjectural reconstructions of cultural objects or sites that no longer exist.
- n) Relocation of cultural sites from one physical location to another.
- o) Removal of cultural objects or elements of cultural sites from the country for any reason.
- p) Digitization of cultural objects or collections, unless part of a larger, clearly defined conservation, documentation, or public diplomacy effort.
- q) Conservation plans or other studies, unless they are one component of a larger project to implement the results of those studies.
- r) Cash reserves, endowments, or revolving funds (funds must be expended within the award period [up to five years] and may not be used to create an endowment or revolving fund).
- s) Costs of fund-raising campaigns.
- t) Contingency, unforeseen, or miscellaneous costs or fees.
- u) Costs of work performed prior to announcement of the award unless allowable per 2 CFR 200.458 and approved by the Grants Officer.
- v) International travel, except in cases where travel is justifiable and integral to the success of the proposed project or to provide project leaders with learning and exchange opportunities with cultural heritage experts.
- w) Individual projects costing less than US \$10,000 or more than \$500,000.
- x) Independent U.S. projects overseas.

Sites and Objects Having a Religious Connection:

The Establishment Clause of the U.S. Constitution permits the government to include religious objects and sites within an aid program under certain conditions. For example, an item with a religious connection (including a place of worship) may be the subject of a cultural preservation grant if the item derives its primary significance and is nominated solely on the basis of architectural, artistic, historical, or other cultural (not religious) criteria.

Required Registrations

An implementing partner must be registered in the U.S. government's System for Award Management (SAM) prior to receiving U.S. federal assistance unless they meet one of the exemptions specified in the Federal Assistance Directive (<https://usdos.sharepoint.com/sites/A-OPE/FA/SitePages/Policy.aspx>). The SAM registration process can take weeks or months, especially for non-U.S. applicants. SAM will assign a Unique Entity Identifier (UEI) automatically to any entity registering or renewing its record in the system. Registration in SAM is free: <https://sam.gov/>.

Disclaimer:

Issuance of this funding opportunity does not constitute an award commitment on the part of the AFCP program or the U.S. government. The Embassy reserves the right to waive program formalities and to reduce, revise, or increase project scopes and budgets in accordance with the needs of the program and the availability of funds.